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## Big student loan forgiveness plan announced by Biden



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President Joe Biden speaks about student loan debt forgiveness in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

## The Aruban economy grew by an estimated 16.2 percent during the first quarter of 2022



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## Redirection of waste from Parkietenbos began this week



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# Big student loan forgiveness plan announced by Biden

By SEUNG MIN KIM, CHRIS MEGERIAN, COLLIN BINKLEY and ZEKE MILLER  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Joe Biden on Wednesday announced detailed plans to deliver on a campaign promise to provide \$10,000 in student debt cancellation for millions of Americans — and up to \$10,000 more for those with the greatest financial need — along with measures to lower the burden of repayment for their remaining federal student debt.

Borrowers who earn less than \$125,000 a year, or families earning less than \$250,000, would be eligible for the \$10,000 loan forgiveness, Biden announced. For those who also receive Pell Grants, which are reserved for undergraduates with the most significant financial need, the federal government would cancel up to an additional \$10,000 in federal loan debt.

"Both of these targeted actions are for families who need it the most: working and middle class people hit especially hard during the pandemic," Biden said in remarks at the White House Wednesday afternoon.

Biden is also extending a pause on all federal student loan payments for what he called the "final time" through the end of 2022.

If his plan survives legal challenges that are almost certain to come, it could of-



President Joe Biden speaks about student loan debt forgiveness in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022, in Washington. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona listens at right.

fer a windfall to many in the run-up to this fall's midterm elections. More than 43 million people have federal student debt, with an average balance of \$37,667, according to federal data. Nearly a third of borrowers owe less than \$10,000, and about half owe less than \$20,000. The White House estimates that Biden's announcement would erase the federal student debt of about 20 million people.

"That's 20 million people who can start getting on with their lives," Biden said. "All this means, people can start to finally crawl out from under that mountain of debt. To get on top of

their rent and utilities. To finally think about buying a home or starting a family or starting a business."

Proponents say cancellation will narrow the racial wealth gap — Black students are more likely to borrow federal student loans and at higher amounts than others. Four years after earning bachelor's degrees, Black borrowers owe an average of nearly \$25,000 more than their white peers, according to a Brookings Institution study.

Biden has faced pressure from liberals to provide broader relief to hard-hit borrowers, but also from

Republicans questioning the fairness of any widespread forgiveness.

The White House emphasized that no one in the top 5% of incomes would see any loan relief. But top Republicans were not persuaded.

Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell said, "President Biden's inflation is crushing working families, and his answer is to give away even more government money to elites with higher salaries. Democrats are literally using working Americans' money to try to buy themselves some enthusiasm from their political base."

In fact many Democrats, from congressional leaders to others facing tough reelection bids this November, have pushed the administration to go as broadly as possible on debt relief, seeing it in part as a galvanizing issue, particularly for Black and young voters.

The extension of the pandemic-era payment freeze comes just days before millions of Americans are to find out when their next student loan bills will be due. The current pause is to end Aug. 31.

The administration said the Education Department would release information in coming weeks for eligible borrowers to sign up for debt relief. Cancellation for some will be automatic, if the department has access to their income information, but others will need to fill out a form.

Current students would be eligible for relief only if their loans were originated before July 1, 2022. Biden is also proposing capping the amount that borrowers must pay monthly on undergraduate loans at 5% of their earnings, down from 10% previously. The Education Department is to post a proposed rule to that effect, which would also cover the unpaid monthly interest for borrowers who remain current with their monthly payments — even when the payments are \$0 because their incomes are low. □

Associated Press



President Joe Biden looks at his grandson Beau Biden as first lady Jill Biden waves and walks to board Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Aug. 10, 2022.

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — First lady Jill Biden has tested positive for COVID-19 again in an apparent "re-

bound" case, after she tested negative for the virus over the weekend. President Joe Biden, who

## Jill Biden has 'rebound' COVID-19 case, president negative

spent three days with his wife at their Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, vacation home, continues to test negative, the White House said. He also suffered a rebound case earlier this month after an initial recovery from the coronavirus.

Jill Biden first tested positive for the virus on Aug. 15, when she and her husband were vacationing in Kiawah Island, South Carolina. She isolated in the beach town until she re-

ceived two negative tests and was cleared to meet the president in Delaware on Sunday. Biden's deputy communications director Kelsey Donohue said the first lady "has experienced no reemergence of symptoms, and will remain in Delaware where she has reinitiated isolation procedures." Donohue said the White House Medical Unit has notified individuals who were in close contact with the first lady.

Jill Biden, 71, and her hus-

band, 79, have been twice-vaccinated and twice-boosted with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. She had been prescribed the antiviral drug Paxlovid, which has proven to be highly effective at preventing serious disease and death among those at highest risk from COVID-19, but a minority of those prescribed the drug have experienced a rebound case of the virus a few days after their initial recovery. □



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## Panel: Trump staffers pushed unproven COVID treatment at FDA

By **MATTHEW PERRONE** and  
**KEVIN FREKING**  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Officials in the Trump White House tried to pressure U.S. health experts into re-authorizing a discredited COVID-19 treatment, according to a congressional investigation that provides new evidence of that administration's efforts to override Food and Drug Administration decisions early in the pandemic.

The report Wednesday by the Democratic-led House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis also sheds new light on the role that television personalities played in bringing hydroxychloroquine to the attention of top White House officials. Investigators highlighted an email from Fox News' Laura Ingraham and others from Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity heart surgeon who had a daytime TV show and is now the Republican Senate nominee in Pennsylvania. Ingraham attended an Oval Office meeting with President Donald Trump, who himself took the anti-malaria drug. The FDA originally authorized use of hydroxychloroquine in late March 2020 based on small studies suggesting it could have some effectiveness against the coronavirus. At that time, many researchers hoped that existing antiviral drugs could be used to fight the virus. But by June, FDA officials had concluded the drug was likely ineffective and could cause potentially dangerous heart complications, revoking its emer-

gency use.

Efforts by the Trump administration to control the release of COVID-19 guidance and install political operatives at public health agencies have been well documented.

The report by the House subcommittee investigating the government's COVID-19 response focused on pressure at the FDA, which serves as gatekeeper for the drugs, vaccines and other countermeasures against the virus.

Much of the information comes from an interview with the agency's former commissioner, Dr. Stephen Hahn, who was picked for the job by Trump in late 2019. Frustrated by the pace of FDA's medical reviews, Trump repeatedly accused Hahn -- without evidence -- of delaying decisions on COVID-19 drugs and vaccines "for political reasons."

Although FDA commissioners are politically appointed, the agency's scientists are expected to conduct their reviews free from outside influence. Indeed, the FDA's credibility largely stems from its reputation for scientific independence. But Hahn told investigators that he felt pressure due to the "persistence" of Trump aide Peter Navarro's calls to reauthorize hydroxychloroquine after the FDA's decision to pull its emergency use.

"We took a different stance at the FDA," Hahn told investigators. "So that disagreement, which of course ultimately became somewhat public, was a

source of pressure."

The subcommittee chairman, Democrat Rep. Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, said efforts to bend the FDA's scientific work on treatments and vaccines exemplified how the "prior administration prioritized politics over public health." But Louisiana Rep. Steve Scalise, the panel's top Republican, said the report was "further proof" that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., "only set up this sham panel to carry out a political vendetta" against Trump.

Much of the report focuses on actions taken by Navarro and Dr. Steven Hatfill, a virologist and outside adviser described by the subcommittee as a "full-time volunteer" on COVID-19 for the White House.

"Dr. Hatfill and Mr. Navarro devised multiple pressure schemes targeting FDA and federal officials who they contended were wrongly impeding widespread access to hydroxychloroquine," according to the report.

In his response, Hatfill said: "We never wrongly pressured anyone. We simply followed the science and the overwhelming evidence as detailed in several studies available at the time." Importantly, there's no evidence that White House efforts ultimately changed the FDA's decisions on hydroxychloroquine or any other therapies.

Investigators also cited a March 28, 2020, email from Oz to Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, stat-



President Donald Trump listens as Dr. Stephen Hahn, commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, speaks during a media briefing in the James Brady Briefing Room of the White House, Aug. 23, 2020, in Washington.

Associated Press

ing that the drug "appears safe and results are better than expected."

Birx forwarded the email to Hahn within the hour, saying "we should talk."

A cancer specialist with no prior political experience, Hahn was widely criticized during the early COVID-19 response for decisions that appeared to cave to White House officials.

According to emails obtained by the committee, Hatfill described "constant fighting with (Dr. Anthony) Fauci and Dr. Hahn" over access to hydroxychloroquine during the summer. Fauci is the nation's top infectious disease expert. During this period Hatfill also urged Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., to request a federal investigation into the handling of hydroxychloroquine, according to a letter submitted for the Congressional Record.

There's no indication such a request was made. But in mid-August, Johnson and fellow Republican Sens.

Mike Lee of Utah and Ted Cruz of Texas wrote the FDA seeking an explanation for the denial to reinstate hydroxychloroquine's authorization. Johnson also chaired a Senate committee hearing in November 2020 on treatment options and complained that doctors who prescribed hydroxychloroquine for COVID had been "scorned."

In the fall of 2020, the focus of both FDA and White House officials turned to the upcoming authorization of the first COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna.

As previously reported, the White House objected to an FDA requirement that vaccine makers gather two months of safety data before filing their applications, contending that condition would delay the launch of the shots. Trump had repeatedly stated the shots would be authorized before Election Day, despite government scientists signaling that timeline was unlikely. □

## Columbus teachers strike on first day back to school

By S. HENDRICKSON  
Associated Press/Report for America

**COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)** — A strike by teachers in Ohio's largest school district entered its third day Wednesday — the first day of school for some 47,000 students, with some of those students and their parents rallying to their sides.

Parents, students, teachers and other employees gathered at schools across the Columbus School District with plans to picket for hours, advocating for safer buildings, better heating and air conditioning, smaller class sizes, and a more well-rounded curriculum that includes art, music and physical education. It's the union's first strike in the district since 1975.

Pickers blasted music on the sidewalks outside Whetstone High School in Columbus and waved to honking drivers. Some held up signs reading, "Columbus schools deserve working air," "a history lesson in progress" and "my feet hurt but I'll walk as long as it takes."

The school district and the union resumed bargaining Wednesday afternoon. The school board said its offer to the union put children first.



A union member proudly pickets with her homemade sign as part of a district-wide teacher's strike outside Whetstone High School in Columbus, Ohio, on Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022.

Associated Press

"We offered a generous compensation package for teachers and provisions that would have a positive impact on classrooms," the board said in a statement. Eva Tweneboagh, a senior at Whetstone High School, picketed alongside her teachers, her friends and friends' parents on the sunny Wednesday morning. She said it's strange to start off with another disrupted school year, especially

since she "hasn't had a normal school year" through high school. While she's worried about the strike continuing and affecting things like college scholarships and her grades, she said, her teachers shouldn't be backing down. "What they're asking is reasonable," Tweneboagh said. The school district and teachers "should be able to come together," she said.

The Ohio Education Association said more than 94% of the Columbus Education Association members voted to reject the school board's final offer late Sunday. The union represents more than 4,000 teachers, librarians, nurses and other employees, though it isn't clear how many of those 4,000 members were not on the job Wednesday. The tens of thousands of students in the district are now

starting the school year with remote education, made up of lesson plans and videos they can access through their schools without a teacher to guide them. It's a start that has some parents concerned. Remote learning has contributed to students falling behind academically and to mental health and behavioral challenges. Mayor Andrew J. Ginther announced in a news release that the city is partnering with recreation centers and area nonprofit organizations to open "support centers" with reliable internet service for students affected by the teacher strike. The centers began operating Wednesday and are providing spaces for students to access online lessons, however, they are "not intended to serve as a substitute for in-person academic instruction." Whitney Price, mom to a first grader at Columbus Spanish Immersion School, said that while she supports teachers, she wished these negotiations between the teachers and the school district had gotten done earlier, when it wouldn't have affected kids in school. □

## Ex-NYC Mayor de Blasio heads to Harvard as teaching fellow

By KAREN MATTHEWS  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Former New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio is headed to Harvard this fall as a teaching fellow at the university's schools of government and public health.

De Blasio, a Democrat who served as mayor from from 2014 to 2021, will take part in "a variety of discussions, events, and programming" at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School and will teach classes on leadership and public service at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the schools said in separate announcements Wednesday.

Kim Janey, the former acting mayor of Boston, will

also serve as a fellow at the public health school. "We are thrilled to welcome Mayor de Blasio and Mayor Janey to campus as Men-schel Senior Leadership Fel-lows," Dean Michelle A. Wil-

liams said. Williams said both officials grappled with public health crises including CO-VID-19, homelessness and the opioid epidemic. "Their insights and their



Then-New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio speaks at the opening of New York's Wollman Rink in Central Park on Sunday, Nov. 14, 2021.

Associated Press

mentorship will be tremendously helpful to students who aspire to public office, as well as to those who are looking to lead in other sectors," she said. At the Institute of Politics, de Blasio will be joined by other fellows including former Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Setti Warren, interim director of the institute, said de Blasio's "decades of experience in local government, federal agencies, national campaigns, and running the largest city in the country will provide invaluable insight to our students and the Harvard community." De Blasio said he looked forward to teaching a new generation of leaders and activists. "My key message

to them: we CAN make bold progressive change. I know because I've lived it," the former mayor tweeted. De Blasio, who grew up in Massachusetts and is a die-hard Boston Red Sox fan, was prevented by term limits from seeking a third four-year term as mayor. After an unsuccessful campaign for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, de Blasio flirted this year with running for governor of New York and later mounted a brief run for a congressional district that includes his Brooklyn home. Former federal prosecutor and Trump impeachment counsel Daniel Goldman secured the Democratic nomination for that seat in a primary Tuesday. □

# EU report: Drought-hit Europe could face 3 more dry months

By LORNE COOK  
Associated Press

**BRUSSELS (AP)** — Parts of the European Union could face three more months of warmer and drier conditions as Europe weathers a major drought that has fueled forest fires, dried up rivers and devastated crops, the 27-nation bloc's Earth observation program is warning in a report.

"Warmer and drier than usual conditions are likely to occur in the western Euro-Mediterranean region in the coming months till November 2022," notably in Spain and Portugal, the EU's Copernicus program said in a report for the month of August.

Almost half of the 27-nation EU is under drought warning, with conditions worsening in Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Spain. The report also noted rising drought hazards outside the EU, in Britain, Serbia, Ukraine and Moldova.



Horses gather around two hay bins on a dried out meadow in Wehrheim near Frankfurt, Germany, Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2022. German agriculture suffers from a long and warm weather period without rain.

Associated Press

Copernicus said that a shortage of rain and a sequence of heatwaves since May has led to the dry conditions and lower river levels. That in turn has hit the energy sector, depriving hydroelectric and other power plants of their prime source of energy

and cooling liquid. Water shortages and heat stress are also reducing European crop yields, with maize, soybeans, and sunflowers hardest hit. Recent rainfall in August has helped some regions, but crops in other areas have been battered by thunder-

storms. The report comes amid what experts say could be the continent's worst drought in 500 years. Little significant rainfall has been recorded for almost two months, but Europe isn't alone. □

# WHO: COVID deaths down by 15%, cases fall nearly everywhere

**GENEVA (AP)** — The number of coronavirus deaths reported worldwide fell by 15% in the past week while new infections dropped by 9%, the World Health Organization said Wednesday. In its latest weekly assess-

ment of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.N. health agency said there were 5.3 million new cases and more than 14,000 deaths reported last week. WHO said the number of new infections declined in every

world region except the Western Pacific. Deaths jumped by more than 183% in Africa but fell by nearly a third in Europe and by 15% in the Americas. Still, WHO warned that COVID-19 numbers are likely severely underestimated as many countries have dropped their testing and surveillance protocols to monitor the virus, meaning that there are far fewer cases being detected. WHO said the predominant COVID-19 variant worldwide is omicron subvariant BA.5, which accounts for more than 70% of virus sequences shared with the world's biggest public viral database. Omicron variants account for 99% of all sequences reported in the last month. Earlier this week, Pfizer

asked U.S. regulators to authorize its combination COVID-19 vaccine that adds protection against the newest omicron relatives, BA.4 and BA.5, a key step towards opening a fall booster campaign. The Food and Drug Administration had ordered vaccine makers to tweak their shots to target BA.4 and BA.5, which are better than ever at dodging immunity from earlier vaccination or infection. Meanwhile, in the U.K., regulators authorized a version of Moderna's updated COVID-19 vaccine last week that includes protection against the earlier omicron subvariant BA.1. British officials will offer it to people aged 50 and over beginning next month. □



A boy talks to his mother from a smartphone during the opening of classes at the San Juan Elementary School in metro Manila, Philippines on Monday, Aug. 22, 2022.

Associated Press

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# Large-scale' fighting shatters lull in Ethiopia's Tigray

By **CARA ANNA**  
Associated Press

**NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)** — Ethiopia's military has launched a "large-scale" offensive for the first time in a year in the country's northern Tigray region, Tigray authorities alleged Wednesday, while the government countered that Tigray forces attacked first. The renewed conflict is a significant setback to mediation efforts and the work to reach millions of people starved of food and other needs.

The claims followed months of regrouping by one of Africa's largest militaries. Ethiopia's military this week warned the public against any reporting of troop movements. Journalists haven't been allowed into Tigray for more than a year. The Tigray conflict began in November 2020, killing thousands of people in Africa's second-most populous country.

Now, as then, both sides have acted at a moment when the world was focused elsewhere the U.S. presidential election in 2020 and the six-month mark of the Ukraine war Wednesday.



**Ethiopian government soldiers ride in the back of a truck on a road near Agula, north of Mekele, in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia on May 8, 2021.**

day. The Tigray conflict had calmed in recent months amid slow-moving mediation efforts.

But last week, the spokeswoman for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed asserted to journalists that Tigray authorities were "refusing to accept peace talks."

An Aug. 23 letter signed by Tigray leader Debretsion Gebremichael and shared

with The Associated Press says Tigray leaders had "conducted two rounds of confidential face-to-face talks with senior military and civilian officials," the first confirmation of direct talks. But the letter says "unacceptable conditions have been inserted into the peace process," and it urges the international community to step in quickly. The Tigray military com-

mand's statement Wednesday said Ethiopian forces, along with Amhara special forces and Amhara militias, "have started a large-scale attack around 5:00 a.m. in the direction of Alamata, southern Tigray." Tigray forces spokesman Getachew Reda tweeted that the offensive followed a "week-long provocation" by forces in the neighboring Amhara region.

Associated Press

Ethiopian military spokesman Getnet Adane didn't respond to questions. The government's communication service in a statement asserted that the Tigray forces launched attacks Wednesday morning. It said if attacks continue, "the government will take measures to save the country ... and also bring (Tigray forces) to the negotiating table whether it likes it or not."

Ethiopia's government has said it's ready for talks, but insists the African Union must lead mediation efforts. Tigray authorities have criticized the continental body's efforts and urgently sought the resumption of telephone, banking and other services that have been largely cut off since the war began.

Earlier this month, World Health Organization director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, an ethnic Tigrayan, described the crisis in Tigray as "the worst disaster on Earth" and wondered aloud if the reason global leaders have not responded was due to "the color of the skin of the people in Tigray." □

# Colombia's police will boost efforts to replace coca fields

By **MANUEL RUEDA**  
Associated Press

**BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)** — Colombia's police force said a newspaper misreported Tuesday that it suspended operations to forcibly eradicate coca fields as the country's new leftist government seeks to change its approach to dealing with illegal drugs.

A police statement said that manual eradication teams are still operating but added that officials are stepping up efforts to persuade farmers to voluntarily adopt alternative crops.

The Bogota newspaper El Tiempo initially reported that the nation's new police director, Gen. Henry Sanabria, said during an interview that eradication

operations had been suspended. The paper later reported that Sanabria's communication team explained that Sanabria referred only to aerial fumiga-

tion of coca crops, which was suspended in 2015. Sanabria, who was named to the post last week, said during the interview that police are trying to lessen

the impact of anti-narcotics policies on people who "have the least responsibility for drug trafficking."

His statements reflect the priorities of Colombia's newly inaugurated president, Gustavo Petro, a leftist who said during his campaign that he wants to find new ways to fight drug trafficking, including putting a greater emphasis on rural development in areas that are still producing large amounts of coca leaf, which is the basic ingredient in cocaine.

Previously, governments in Colombia set annual targets for eradicating coca crops, and deployed thousands of police and soldiers to remote parts of the country to manually pull

coca bushes out of the ground with shovels, or kill coca plants with crop dusters and most recently drones.

But forceful eradication operations have led to violent confrontations between police and farmers, who argue that the lack of infrastructure in remote parts of Colombia makes other crops economically unviable. Over the years, dozens of police officers who participated in eradication operations have been killed by snipers or injured by landmines.

The eradication programs received financial and technical support from the United States, but failed to make a significant dent on the cocaine trade. □



**New Colombian police chief, Gen. Henry Sanabria, parades during his swearing-in ceremony in Bogotá, Colombia, Friday, Aug. 19, 2022.**

Associated Press

## Redirection of waste from Parkietenbos began this week

**ORANJESTAD – The community of Aruba was informed that starting on the 22nd of August, the dump at Parkietenbos would not receive tires as waste anymore. This week, minister of Integrity, Nature, Transport and Older Persons Affairs, Mr. Ursell Arends gave a press conference in front of Parkietenbos in order to give more information on the subject of responsible waste management.**

In front of other stakeholders like Bureau City Inspector, Serlimar, Ecotech and Carentra VBA, minister Arends explained that the plan to begin redirecting waste began this week, by no longer burning tires in open air.

Six months ago the platform Trash2Cash was established to begin responsible waste management based on the principle of a circular economy, in order to stop some waste from reaching Parkietenbos.

Tires at the dump are a danger to the environment as well as the health of the habitants of the neighborhood. In order to come up with a solution, local businesses will process tires and create an additional raw material in the form of oil, which can be sold in the local market. This will result in less funds going abroad, which will recirculate in the local economy.

"The 22nd of August marks the beginning to stop fires at the dump in Parkietenbos", Arends said.

He added that this will elevate the value of the neighborhood of Parkietenbos and the community around the dump. This will also be an opportunity to inventory all possibilities on Aruba to use various methods to process waste that are not just bringing waste to the dump and burning it.

"My vision is to close Parkietenbos, to redirect different forms of waste to those who have the expertise and infrastructure to process this in a responsible

manner. Once the dump is no longer receiving waste, that in turn gives us the opportunity to turn the area into a solar park", he assured.

Minister Arends said also that sometimes change is met with resistance, but he emphasized that it is necessary that this often times is the result of lack of information or fear of change and insecurity. "What's more important is that this is a personal interest, as a minister I am bringing policy that includes change, and I choose to use the force of resistance as the force to go forward to do what's best for our country."

Arends said that it is no longer an option to let the neighborhood which for decades was harmed continue being harmed. "It is no longer an option to continue destroying nature, and it is no longer an option to continue debilitating our only economic pillar, our tourism. It's not an option to put our own health and wellbeing as a priority, our only option as a country is to use our force and positive energy for change."

Representative of Serlimar, Jermaro Emerencia expressed that the waste processing company put a sign at the dump to inform the community regarding fires, and that the way they will receive this is by putting them in a container. Emerencia did not provide more details, but said in the coming days they will make an announcement via social media.

Eduard Jimenez, operations manager of Ecotech Freezone, said that the company is ready to receive the tires as they had announced last month. He said this month they made preparations and organized to receive the tires, and that the support minister Arends' initiative for a more sustainable Aruba. □



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## Urgent care Aruba contributes to medical tourism by offering preventive health packages



**ORANJESTAD** - Since the start of the pandemic, people have become more aware of the importance and contribution of the healthcare sector. People have also become more aware of their overall health.

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## First positive Monkeypox case in Aruba

**Oranjestad – Aruba has its first confirmed case of Monkeypox**

The case concerns a resident with no recent travel history. The Department

of Public Health concluded that this infection took place in Aruba. There is also a suspicious case under investigation.

Monkeypox virus spreads

from person to person through direct contact with the infected person. It can happen by:

Direct contact with respiratory secretions (droplets)

when the infected person coughs or sneezes; direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids of the blisters (skin to skin or touching infected clothes). If you notice blisters on different body parts, contact your family physician to get tested and take the necessary precautions.

Symptoms of Monkeypox typically include:

- Fever;
- Headache;
- Tiredness;
- Muscle aches;
- Swollen lymph nodes.
- Vaccines

DVG will soon receive a limited number of Monkeypox vaccines from the Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezond-

heid en Milieu - RIVM of the Netherlands. (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment).

The vaccines will be available for the high-risk groups according to the instructions and policy of the Netherlands. The health providers and specialists will call the risk group members to receive the vaccine if they so desire. DVG will work with some organizations to jointly reach the high-risk groups.

For more information follow the DVG on Facebook Directie Volksgezondheid DVG Aruba, or visit [www.dvg.aw](http://www.dvg.aw), call 5224200 or send email to [servicio@dvg.aw](mailto:servicio@dvg.aw). □





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## Honoring of loyal visitors at Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort

**EAGLE BEACH** - Recently, Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure in honoring many loyal Aruba visitors with their distinctive certificates. These certificates are a way to say "Masha Danki" for continuously choosing Aruba as a favorite vacation destination. The titles are as following: 10+ years "Distinguished Visitor", 20+ years "Goodwill Ambassador" and 36+ years "Emerald Ambassador".

The honorees are Jerry and Cheryl Moon, residents of Oklahoma, United States who have been honored as Distinguished Ambassadors of Aruba.

This symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between the 10-20-35 and more

consecutive year mark.

The couple loves coming to the island for Bucuti & Tara being their home away from home, the amazing eagle beach, Aruban people and their hospitality, beauty and serenity of the island, peaceful and relaxing atmosphere as well as the delicious food.

Ms. Kimberly Richardson & Ms. Olga Ruiz representing the Aruba Tourism Authority and members of the Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort bestowed the certificate of the Ambassadors and handed some presents to the honorees and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years on behalf of the Government of Aruba. □



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# The Aruban economy grew by an estimated 16.2 percent during the first quarter of 2022

Today the Centrale Bank van Aruba (CBA) published the State of the Economy for the first quarter of 2022. This publication provides a synopsis of this period's local and international economic developments. The domestic highlights are presented below, including a summary of leading economic indicators.

During the first quarter of 2022, the economy of Aruba grew by an estimated 16.2 percent, when compared to the corresponding quarter of 2021. This expansion was mainly spurred by a strong rebound in the tourism sector. Aruba's year-on-year real GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth has maintained its upward trajectory since the second quarter of 2021.

The surge in tourism activities was reflected in a jump in total stay-over visitors and total visitor nights, leading to buoyant developments in the tourism services sector and total tourism revenue. Aruba received a total of 233,666 visitors, an increase of 108.0 percent compared to the first quarter of 2021. Total visitor nights almost doubled compared to the first quarter of 2021, reaching 1,828,141 nights. The higher hotel occupancy rate of 62.2 percent and a spike in the average daily rate to US\$ 355.30 led to a significant increase of 161.7 percent in the revenue per available room during the first quarter of 2022. Over the same period, total tourism revenue – as measured by tourism credits and registered in the Balance of Payments – soared by 92.0 percent to Afl. 874.8 million.

Commensurately, consumption-related indicators also improved, reflecting the continued economic recovery. During the first quarter of 2022, almost all consumption-related indicators showed improvement compared to the same period of 2021, signifying a continued econom-

Table 1 Tourism Indicators for Aruba

Indicator	2021 Q1	2022 Q1	Change	%Change
Stay-over visitors	112,334	233,666	121,332	108.0
Average length of stay (in days)	8.4	7.8	(0.6)	(7.1)
Total visitor nights	941,881	1,828,141	886,260	94.1
Cruise visitors	-	155,236	155,236	-
Hotel occupancy rate (%)	29.6	62.2	32.6*	-
Average daily rate (in USD)	285.5	355.3	69.8	24.4
Revenue per available room (in USD)	84.4	220.9	136.5	161.7
Tourism revenues per night (in Afl.)	483.6	478.5	(5.1)	(1.1)
Tourism revenues** (in Afl. million)	455.5	874.8	419.3	92.1

Sources: CBA, ATA, AHATA, APA, CTO, STR

\* Percentage points

\*\* Only those registered at local commercial banks

ic recovery. Revenue from turnover taxes (+33.3 percent) and taxes on commodities (+30.4 percent), total value of merchandise imports (+40.3 percent), and the number of I-Pago transactions (+41.6 percent) surged in response to the increased demand brought on by the buoyant tourism performance. Furthermore, household water consumption and employment showed accelerated growth, while household electricity consumption rebounded.

Alternatively, credit market developments pointed to sluggish consumption demand, as witnessed in the respective drop of 3.6 percent and 6.5 percent in personal loans and car loans. The Consumer Confidence Index echoed the contractions witnessed in total outstanding consumer credit, as consumers were slightly more pessimistic in the first quarter of 2022 compared to the same period of 2021.

### Inflation in Aruba is trend-

### ing upwards

Albeit at a relatively slower pace, inflation in Aruba has been trending upwards since the beginning of 2021. Compared to March 2021, the end of period inflation stood at 4.0 percent at the end of March 2022. When measured as the percentage change in the 12-month average of the CPI (Consumer Price Index), inflation reached 2.1 percent at the end of March 2022. The real exchange rate of the Aruban florin vis-à-vis the U.S. dollar continued on a downward trajectory in the first quarter of 2022, thereby improving the competitive position of Aruba compared to the United States. This improved competitive position resulted mainly from the consumer prices in the United States rising faster than those in Aruba. In March 2022, the 12-month average inflation in the United States amounted to 6.2 percent, against a 2.1 percent increase in Aruba.

### International transactions

### resulted in a large inflow of foreign exchange

International transactions settled through the commercial banks resulted in a significant net inflow of foreign exchange of Afl. 402.9 million during the first three months of 2022, pushing international reserves to Afl. 3,287.8 million. Both the current and the financial accounts of the balance of payments were positively impacted, recording on balance a net inflow of Afl. 272.7 million in foreign exchange (2021 Q1: Afl. 92.3 million surplus).

The inflows on the financial account during the first quarter of 2022 stemmed mainly from a loan received from the Netherlands (registered as 'other investment' in the Balance of Payments) to the Government of Aruba (GoA), in order to repay its maturing external debt in 2022 as part of an agreement with the Government of the Netherlands. The sub-component 'other investment' resulted in a net in-

flow of Afl. 292.6 million in the period under review, which was partially offset by portfolio investment (net outflow of Afl. 40.9 million associated with outgoing payments in connection with government bond repayments) and foreign accounts (a net outflow of Afl. 38.6 million).

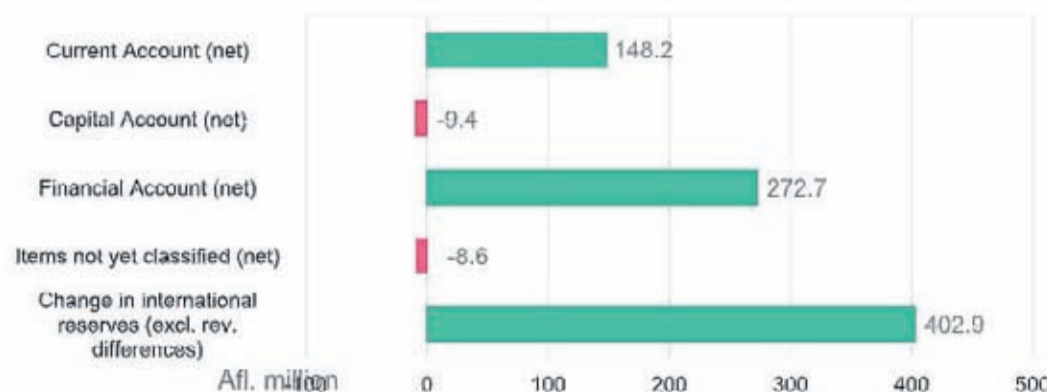
### The government financial deficit narrowed, yet the government debt expanded

In the first quarter of 2022, based upon available information, the government financial operations led to the financial deficit narrowing to Afl. 52.0 million from Afl. 162.7 million. Total government revenue increased by Afl. 48.2 million, reaching Afl. 271.2 million at the end of the first quarter of 2022. However, total revenue still remained below the 2019.

First-quarter level (-10.4 percent). During the period under review, total government expenditure contracted by Afl. 63.5 million to Afl. 319.7 million, mainly because of contraction in transfers and subsidies and in transfers to General Health Insurance (AZV).

At the end of the first quarter of 2022, the government debt rose by Afl. 360.2 million, reaching Afl. 6,015.8 million, representing a growth of 6.4 percent when compared to compared to December 2021. An expansion of Afl 336.9 million in foreign debt and an enlargement of Afl. 23.3 million in domestic debt caused the increase in debt. The developments in government debt resulted in an estimated debt-to-GDP ratio of 103.3 percent at the end of the first quarter of 2022. Thus, although the liquidity support from the Netherlands facilitated short-term government financial operations and obligations, these additional loans further exacerbated the government's limited fiscal space. □

Chart 1: International transactions through the banking system (2022 Q1)



# A Friendship that Started 50 Years ago in Beirut comes Full Circle in Aruba

Clyde R. Harms Sr.



Ruth and Margaret appeared in the 1972-1973 Yearbook of ACS- American Community School of Beirut, Lebanon



Margaret and several other Macalester classmates attended Stephen's graduation from Medical School, University of Missouri, May 197



In 2011 Ruth hosted the Turkey's bi-annual reunion. The girls stayed at Casa del Mar. The girls had a busy week. One evening, Ruth's father, hosted a typical Aruban type fish fry with fried plantains, 'funchi', Creole sauce, 'pan bati' and avocado salad. On another evening the Turkey's were treated to an Indonesian Rijsttafel catered by a friend of the Harms in Savaneta. They took an escorted tour that included a swim in the natural pool on the north coast; they visited Renaissance Island, snorkaled during the day, sailed at sunset, and savored the servings of some of the great restaurants of Aruba.



During their four years at Macalester both lived in Turck Hall where their friendship blossomed



Margaret was a bridesmaid at the wedding of Ruth and Stephen in Columbia, MO on December 31, 1979



Ruth and Margaret appeared in the 1972-1973 yearbook of ACS- American Community School of Beirut



Vacationing at Arashi in Aruba in 1977. Margaret was among the friends and family that joined Ruth that year.

Ruth Harms was born in Aruba, Margaret Kelberer was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon. They met at the American Community School (ACS) in Beirut in 1972, 50 years ago. Margaret's dad was an executive with Arabian American Oil Co (Aramco) in Dhahran and Ruth's dad was the head of the Computer Department of Esso Libya in Tripoli.

Margaret had attended ACS since first grade. Ruth had graduated from the Oil Companies (middle) School in Tripoli in 1970 and before that, had attended five different schools in

Aruba, Kansas, New York and Venezuela. She had attended Près Fleuris in Bluche sur Sierre, Switzerland the last two years, but decided to transfer to ACS.

Margaret and Ruth formed a close friendship and decided they would together attend Macalaster College in Margaret's home state Minnesota. During their four years at Macalester both lived in Turk Hall where their friendship blossomed. Together with the other students who lived on the second floor they called themselves the Turkey's and formed a bond of friendship that has lasted

the decades to this date. Ruth became like another sister in the Kelberer family and often went to spend time with the family in their vacation bungalow near International Falls at the border of Canada. On various occasions Margaret also accompanied Ruth on vacations in Aruba.

In the intervening 50 years, Ruth and Margaret continued to see each other at least every other year and watched each other's children grow. Margaret was a bridesmaid at Ruth's wedding in 1979 and Ruth was present at Margaret's wedding.

Margaret and husband George Leiter spent two years as teachers in Trinidad and Tobago and during that period they visited Ruth's parents in nearby Aruba a couple of times.

When Ruth's dad celebrated his 90th birthday, Margaret and George returned to Aruba to join the fun. They also hinted they were interested in purchasing the property. Four months later, when Annie, Margaret's youngest sister was going to reach 50, the sisters arranged to celebrate the big event in Aruba at Milagro's Garden Apartments, an Airbnb that Ruth's fa-

ther operated. The interest in purchasing the property turned into an oral offer to purchase. A few weeks later a contract of Sale and Purchase was signed.

On April 11, 2022 the Notarial Deed of Sale was signed and Ruth came to Aruba to be present at this historic moment. Margaret became the owner of the house where Ruth's god-mother had lived for many years and where Ruth's father had lived since 1987. The friendship that had started half a century before in Beirut had come full circle in Aruba. □



# Our first steps? Fossil may boost case for earliest ancestor



This illustration provided by the University of Poitiers in August 2022 shows different modes of movement practiced by Sahelanthropus tchadensis.

Associated Press

By **MADDIE BURAKOFF**  
AP Science Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Twenty years ago, scientists discovered a 7-million-year-old skull that they concluded belonged to a creature who walked upright and was our earliest known ancestor. Not everyone was convinced. Now, the researchers are back with more evidence they say strengthens their case.

Their new study published Wednesday analyzed arm and leg fossils found near the skull in Africa, looking for signs of walking on two feet instead of on all fours. When early humans started walking upright, it marked a key moment in our split away from apes. In the paper in the journal Nature, researchers again place the creature just on the human side of that evolutionary divide. The fossil species, named Sahelanthropus tchadensis, walked upright while still being able to climb around in trees, they reported.

The species has been dated to around 7 million years ago, which makes it the oldest known human ancestor, by a long shot. That's about a million years older than other early known hominins.

But it's been a source of fierce debate since the fossils were first unearthed in Chad in 2001.

Researchers also led by scientists at the University

of Poitiers in France initially looked at the fossil creature's skull, teeth and jaw. They argued that the creature must have walked on two feet and held its head upright, based on the location of the hole in the skull where the spinal cord connects to the brain. □

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# R&B Hall of Fame headed to small Mississippi Delta town

**MICHAEL GOLDBERG**  
Associated Press/Report for America

**JACKSON, Miss. (AP)** — A small town in the Mississippi Delta that has ties to the civil rights movement will soon be home to the National Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame.

Project planners hope to finish building the facility in the town of Marks in two or three years, Velma Wilson, director of economic tourism and development for Quitman County, told The Associated Press on Tuesday. Marks is the county seat of Quitman County and has a population of fewer than 2,000 people.

The project is the culmination of a 50-year effort to build a hall of fame for R&B musicians such as James Brown, Aretha Franklin and B.B. King. "There is no other hall of fame in the world that is primarily focused and dedicated to the history of R&B music on a national scale," LaMont Robinson, CEO of the NRBHF, said in a news release. "My vision to build a hall of fame to honor R&B and its contributions to civil rights, Amer-



This image provided by A2H Engineers, Architects, Planners on Aug. 18, 2022, shows digital rendering of the National Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame in Marks, Miss.

Associated Press

ica, and the entire world is something that I don't take lightly." Robinson founded the hall of fame in 2010. Since 2013, it has inducted more than 200 artists.

Marks appealed to Robinson due to its civil rights history. Martin Luther King Jr. chose the town in 1968 as the starting point for his Poor People's Campaign, which demanded economic justice for poor Americans of all backgrounds. On March 31, 1968, in what would

be his final Sunday sermon before his assassination, King described the poverty-stricken families he encountered in Marks.

"I was in Marks, Mississippi, the other day, which is in Quitman County, the poorest county in the United States. And I tell you I saw hundreds of Black boys and Black girls walking the streets with no shoes to wear," King said at the National Cathedral in Washington. "I saw their mothers

and fathers ... They raised a little money here and there; trying to get a little food to feed the children; trying to teach them a little something." The conditions in the cotton fields of Quitman County and other parts of the Mississippi Delta were the environment in which early civil rights activists and field workers produced music that's now identified as blues, gospel and R&B, project planners said.

"It was this cultural and

musical phenomenon that provided the basis for the prodigious economic success and profits of the U.S. music industry worldwide," planners wrote in a document outlining the project. As of 2020, Quitman County had one of the 20 lowest median income levels of all counties in the country, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. "The Hall of Fame will be the catalyst to Delta tourism growth and opportunities, and a means to attract business and industry," said Democratic U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, who represents Quitman County. The city of Marks donated 5 acres (2 hectares) of land for the project. According to an agreement reviewed by the AP, the Quitman County Economic Tourism and Development agency secured a \$500,000 appropriation from the Mississippi Legislature for infrastructure related to the project.

The agency also hopes to secure an \$11 million federal grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation to beef up development around the hall of fame. □

## Michael K. Williams' final film role in 'Breaking'

By **JAKE COYLE**  
AP Film Writer

"Breaking," Abi Damaris Corbin's lean and heartfelt first feature, is a lackluster bank-robbery thriller with noble intentions enlivened by an impassioned performance

by John Boyega and an elegiac final appearance by the late Michael K. Williams.

It's not until well into "Breaking" that Williams, as a police negotiator, turns up. But the actor, who died last year, immediately reorients and deepens the film. As a sensitive ear to Boyega's former Marine, who's holed up inside an Atlanta-area Wells Fargo bank, Williams and his soulful, melancholy eyes bring a rush of empathy to the film, the white

hair on his beard one last reminder of all the wise older characters the "Wire" actor might have gone on to play.

"Breaking," which opens in theaters Friday, may go down primarily as a footnote in Williams' career but it's also a showcase for Boyega, an actor who, like Williams, has a powerful voice both on and off screen. He plays Brian Brown-Easley, who nervously and with little apparent plan walks into the bank and quietly informs the teller that he has a bomb. Flashbacks fill in the tale, which comes from a true story from 2017. Disjointed scenes capture Brian's long hours on the phone trying to get his disability check from the Department of Veter-

an Affairs. When he goes down to their offices and tells them he soon won't be able to feed himself, he's handed a pamphlet and told to take a number. It's not until dozens of police are outside with snipers' rifles aimed through the windows that we learn what Brian is owed: \$892.34.

"Your life is worth more than that," Williams' police officer tells him.

"Breaking" is about how a feeling of worthlessness can push a person to the brink. Brian is only after what's owed to him; he declines to take the bank's money. He's courteous to the two hostages, played by Nicole Beharie and Selenis Leyva. And, more than anything, he just wants to be heard, to not have his



This image released by Bleecker Street shows Michael K. Williams in a scene from "Breaking."

Associated Press

voice drowned out by VA bureaucracy and society's disinterest. Inside the bank, Brian spends most of his time pleading for a negotiator to be assigned or imploring a local reporter (Connie Britton) for coverage. "Tell them about what's happening!" he screams. As in Sidney Lumet's "Dog Day Afternoon," Brian's gambit is more protest than heist. But "Breaking," penned by Corbin with the British

playwright Kwame Kwei-Armah, struggles to mix elements on the ground with a character study into Brian's life. Scenes over the phone with his estranged wife (Olivia Washington) and daughter (London Covington) are flat. And by the time "Breaking" creeps to its bloody climax, the movie has only made a thin sketch of its protagonist despite Boyega's obvious dedication. □

## MLB teams to play all 29 opponents under '23 balanced sked

By **RONALD BLUM**  
AP Baseball Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Every major league team will play each other in the same season for the first time next year as the sport switches to its first balanced schedule since 2000.

As a result of the format switch agreed to in the March lockout settlement, high-profile games between division rivals such as Yankees-Red Sox, Dodgers-Giants and Cubs-Cardinals will be reduced from 19. Intradivision games will drop from 47% to 32%.

A team will host all of the other 29 clubs at least once every two seasons.

"I think it's great for the fans," Mets manager Buck Showalter said. "I'm so tired of playing the same people." Major League Baseball said Wednesday it will open the 2023 season on March 30 and again will try to have every team start on the same day, which last occurred in 1968.

A team will play 13 games against each division rival for a total of 52 and six or seven against each other club in its league for a total of 64. The remaining 46 games are against interleague opponents: a home and road two-game series against a so-called natu-



**Members of the U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute into Yankee Stadium before a baseball game between the Toronto Blue Jays and the New York Yankees. Saturday, Aug. 20, 2022, in New York.**

Associated Press

ral rival and a single three-game series against each of the 14 other clubs in the opposite league.

"This new format creates more common opponents, both in the division and among your league opponents, so that typically when you're competing for the wild card, there's a much higher percentage of common opponents across divisions," said Chris Marinak, MLB's chief operations and strategy officer. "And we think that equity is good for the competition on the field."

"On the marketing side, we think that the new schedule gives our fans more opponents at home, so they get to see a broader array of clubs in their ballpark,"

Marinak said. "And probably more importantly, it gives us a chance for our star players to get exposure more nationally and be seen in more places throughout the season."

The American League used a balanced schedule from 1977-2000 and the National League from 1993-2000, with interleague play starting in 1997 and limited to 15-18 games per season for each team. Then-Commissioner Bud Selig had pushed for a return to an unbalanced schedule.

AL openers have Baltimore at Boston, the Chicago White Sox at Houston, Minnesota at Kansas City, the Los Angeles Angels at Oakland, Cleveland at Seattle and Detroit at Tampa Bay.

NL openers are Milwaukee at the Chicago Cubs, Pittsburgh at Cincinnati, Arizona at the Los Angeles Dodgers, the New York Mets at Miami, Colorado at San Diego and Atlanta at Washington.

Interleague openers have San Francisco at the New York Yankees, Toronto at St. Louis and Philadelphia at Texas.

Other home openers are the Giants at the White Sox and the Mets at Milwaukee on April 3; San Diego at Atlanta, the Dodgers at Arizona, the Yankees at Baltimore, Boston at Detroit, Houston at Minnesota, Miami at the Mets and Cincinnati at Philadelphia on April 6, and Seattle at Cleveland, Washington at Colorado, Toronto at the Angels, the White Sox at Pittsburgh and Kansas City at San Francisco on April 7. Toronto opens with 10 road games before hosting Detroit on April 11, a request made by the Blue Jays because of construction at Rogers Centre.

The schedule usually is updated with game times during the winter.

Next year's start is the earliest since 2019. The season will revert to 186 days from the 182 it was shortened to this year due to the lockout.

Natural interleague rivals include Mets-Yankees, Cubs-White Sox, Dodgers-Angels, Giants-Athletics, Reds-Indians, Marlins-Rays, Orioles-Nationals, Royals-Cardinals and Brewers-Twins.

Among the teams with no geographic interleague rivals, MLB paired Red Sox-Braves, Pirates-Tigers, Phillies-Blue Jays, Rangers-Diamondbacks, Astros-Rockies and Padres-Mariners.

Travel is roughly the same as the prior format, which had teams play 76 games against division foes, 66 against other clubs in the league (seven vs. six teams and six against four teams) and 20 interleague.

"The bulk of what dictates your travel is the number of trips you take, and this doesn't change the number of trips," said Chuck Torres, MLB's senior director of scheduling and broadcasting. Other than within its own division, a team can host or visit a maximum of three teams from another division. To combat exhaustion, each team was scheduled for seven off days among its last 67 days, three among its last 32 and one in its last 10.

MLB tried to have all 30 clubs play on the same opening day for four of the past five seasons. □

## Marc Soler gives Spain 1st Grand Tour stage win in 2 years

**BILBAO, Spain (AP)** — With the finish line in sight, Marc Soler looked back over his shoulder and realized his challengers wouldn't catch him.

He threw his hand to his helmet in apparent disbelief, then started celebrating a big win for him and his country.

Soler broke free on the final ascent to win the fifth stage of the Spanish Vuelta on Wednesday and give Spain its first stage win at a Grand Tour race in two years. No Spanish rider had won since Ion Izagirre took the sixth stage of the 2020 Vuelta.

"In the end I was able to make it happen and I'm

very happy," said Soler, of UAE Team Emirates. "It's not easy. There are many Spanish riders in many teams but we often have to work. It's not easy but we can also win."

Soler's other win at the Vuelta came on the second stage in 2020.

Frenchman Rudy Molard was in the group of riders who crossed the line four seconds behind Soler and took the overall leader's red jersey from three-time defending champion Primož Roglič, who had won Tuesday's stage.

"I was stressed until the end," said Molard, a Frenchman from team Groupama-FDJ. "It means

a lot to me. Last year, I left the race with a serious accident. I didn't know if I would be able to return to my best level. And a year later I lead a Grand Tour. I really struggled this winter, I couldn't do any sport for several weeks. You always have to believe."

Molard leads the general classification by two seconds ahead of Fred Wright, the British rider from team Bahrain Victorious. Germany's Nikias Arndt, of Team DSM, was more than a minute back in third place.

Roglič, trying to become the first rider to win four straight Vuelta titles, fell to fifth place, more than four minutes off the lead. His



**Spanish rider Marc Soler of UAE team Emirates celebrates after winning the 5th stage of the Vuelta cycling race between Irun and Bilbao, northern Spain, Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022.**

Associated Press

Jumbo-Visma had its riders wearing the red jersey in each of the first four stages. The three-week race, which

began with three stages in the Netherlands, will finish in Madrid. □

# Innovative coach Don Coryell picked as HOF finalist

By **JOSH DUBOW**  
**AP Pro Football Writer**

Innovative offensive coach Don Coryell, who helped usher in the modern passing game to the NFL, was picked as a finalist for the Pro Football Hall of Fame's class of 2023.

The former Chargers and Cardinals coach was announced Wednesday as the candidate from a group of 12 coaches and contributors. Coryell will get into the Hall if he is supported by at least 80% of the full Hall of Fame panel of voters next January.

Coryell had a 111-83-1 record in 14 NFL seasons, won three playoff games and never reached a Super Bowl.

But his impact on the game with his famous "Air Cory-



Former San Diego Chargers coach Don Coryell is shown before an NFL football game Sunday Nov. 15, 2009, in San Diego.

Associated Press

ell" offense in San Diego was transcendent as he took advantage of rule changes that opened up the passing game in the late 1970s and put together an offense that still influences the game today.

After a successful collegiate stint at San Diego State where he helped groom future Hall of Fame coaches John Madden and Joe Gibbs, Coryell took over the St. Louis Cardinals in 1973.

He led a franchise that won at least 10 games only twice in 53 seasons before he arrived to three straight double-digit win seasons and the team's only two division titles in St. Louis with Jim Hart as his quarterback. Coryell won Coach of the Year in 1974.

But his greatest success came when he took over the Chargers early in the 1978 season and teamed with Hall of Fame quarterback Dan Fouts to form one of the NFL's most dynamic passing games.

With an offense that featured pre-snap motion, only one running back and thrived on throwing the ball downfield, the Chargers changed how offenses played the game.

The success was immediate

with the Chargers making the playoffs in Coryell's first four full seasons with back-to-back trips to the AFC title game in 1980 and '81. A poor defense prevented San Diego from reaching the Super Bowl and the team then failed to post a winning record in his final four seasons.

But during his tenure, the Chargers led the NFL by scoring 26.2 points per game, averaging 390.8 yards per game with 279.5 yards passing per game.

The gap in yards passing between the Chargers and second-place San Francisco (223 per game) was bigger than the gap between the 49ers and the third-worst passing team of that era, the Rams (170.5 yards per game). □

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## ESPN+ reaches 2-year deal with women's pro hockey league

Women's pro hockey in the United States will continue having a broadcast home on ESPN+ after the Premier Hockey Federation announced a two-year contract extension with the streaming service on Wednesday.

ESPN+ will provide live coverage of PHF regular-season games, special events, and the Isobel Cup playoffs. The deal comes a season after the two first formed a partnership in which the PHF's championship game aired live on ESPN2.

Entering its eighth season as North America's only women's professional hockey league, the PHF is expanding to seven teams by adding a franchise in Montreal. The league also has teams based in Boston, Newark, New Jersey, Milford, Connecticut, Buffalo, New York, Richfield, Minnesota and Toronto.

In Canada, the PHF has a broadcasting agreement with TSN. □